

‘Off Road II’ consisted of a solo exhibition at Danielle Arnaud in London in January 2014. It expanded on the earlier Off Road project by for the first time bringing together all the elements of my artistic practice, video, photography and sculpture.

It developed on from my continuing interest in the notion of freedom as a driving political force in North American culture. The series is part of a larger body of work that looks at what one could call ‘controlled pockets of freedom’ – those places where individuals can go to live out their dreams and fantasies.

Developed over a period of five years, ‘Off Road’ is set at the State Vehicular recreation area of Pismo Beach in California, an area of over 1500 acres of sand dunes open to motor recreation. In stark contrast to the vehicular use, the south side of Pismo Beach, is a nature reserve. The area frequently encounters controversy on account of the ecological impact of its use. Fascinated by the inherent contradictions of this use of landscape, where notions that are seemingly mutually exclusive, coexist, I returned to the area a number of times to explore the paradoxical definitions, and uses, of freedom.

Representing this complex patchwork of ideas and actions, the work consists of 6 different elements: a central projection that is the anchor of the piece, a slide show, a set of interviews and five video ‘objects’ (vignettes of the location that have an object like quality, including a 20 minute continuous shot of the encampment and a dead pan shot of the beach that reads almost like a Rothko painting until a car crosses the image). Very different languages across these elements, from the seductive, sublime qualities of the central projection, to the more documentary slide show (which itself had more than 160 images) and interviews. As a result, ‘Off Road’ occupies a space in between subjectivity and objectivity, juxtaposing contextual, narrative and formal concerns.

A re-definition of the role of condensation of time within video, and of the boundaries between photography, video, documentary and fictional filmic languages, ‘Off Road’ was exhibited at the Hotel Bloom, Brussels in September 2013, as a one-person show at Danielle Arnaud Contemporary Art, London in January 2014 and on viral net, a curatorial project of Tom Leeson (Cal Arts).